

To: cfinn@isinet.com  
Subject: Strategic challenges to ISI  
Date: Sat, 18 Jan 1997 18:31:06 EST  
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1. Key issues

Competition (for money) and distraction (i.e. time) from

- Freebie information :: medline
- Deluge of the WWW

Marketing to end-users

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2. Explosion of the WWW is outstanding event. Look out for web-based computing (appliances vs PC's) in 1997.

A few publishers are catching on; but mainly paralysis.

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3. end-user contact.

Try web-based learning tools

links to SCI from medline [I've suggested to Mike Tansey that ISI emulate some others and provide medline gratis, but with our built-in hot links.]

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4. The ideal product

The net-accessed database comes pretty close!!

We have to integrate that with access to full text document delivery. Here we face serious competitive problems with with NLM, if they can redistribute texts under fair use, and ISI cannot. If you can't beat 'em, join 'em: offer ILL-ordering through NLM as a link from ISI; and reserve ISI-delivery as backup to what ILL can't fulfill.

During 1997 there will be frustrating bandwidth limitations on use of the WWW: need to investigate local mirror sites for access, or whatever the bottleneck is. Try to design the interfaces with bandwidth economy in mind: speed counts for more than pretty pictures.

More generally provide science-oriented search and retrieval tools for more efficient exploitation of the WWW, as well as ISI proprietary databases. We eventually need much smarter semantic interfaces.

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Niche products: hotlinking up to date literature with PDR? Critical announcements like FDA's recent critique of Seldane should appear at prescriber's arm and point of sale at pharmacy. Access via handheld wireless terminals?

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